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April 23, 1959

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Discussion at the Special Meeting
of the National Security Council,
Thursday, April 23, 1959

Present at this Special Meeting of the NSC were the President of the United States, presiding; the Vice President of the United States; the Secretary of State; the Secretary of Defense; the Secretary of the Treasury; the Attorney General; and the Director, U.S. Information Agency. Also attending the meeting were the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; the Director of Central Intelligence; the Deputy Secretary of Defense; the Under Secretary of State; the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; the White House Staff Secretary; the Assistant White House Staff Secretary; the Executive Secretary, NSC; and the Deputy Executive Secretary, NSC.

There follows a summary of the discussion at the meeting and the main points taken.

Mr. Gray explained the purpose of this Special NSC meeting and the general nature of the papers to be discussed. He suggested that the members of the Council bear in mind the final question which would be put to them; namely what if any of the contents of these two papers should subsequently be transmitted to our Allies?

Thereafter, Mr. Gray suggested that the Council take up the so-called military paper entitled: "An Analysis of the Political and Military Implications of Alternative uses of Force to Maintain Access to Berlin". Mr. Gray thought it would be more useful to ask for comment on the main sections of this paper rather than to attempt to go through it paragraph by paragraph. (A copy of Mr. Gray's briefing note is filed in the Minutes of the Meeting and another is attached to this Memorandum).

Upon completing his introductory remarks, Mr. Gray inquired whether there were any comments on the introductory section of the military paper. Secretary Herter merely stated that the paper

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E.O. 12356, SEC. 3.4(b)

Agency Case NSC F89-790

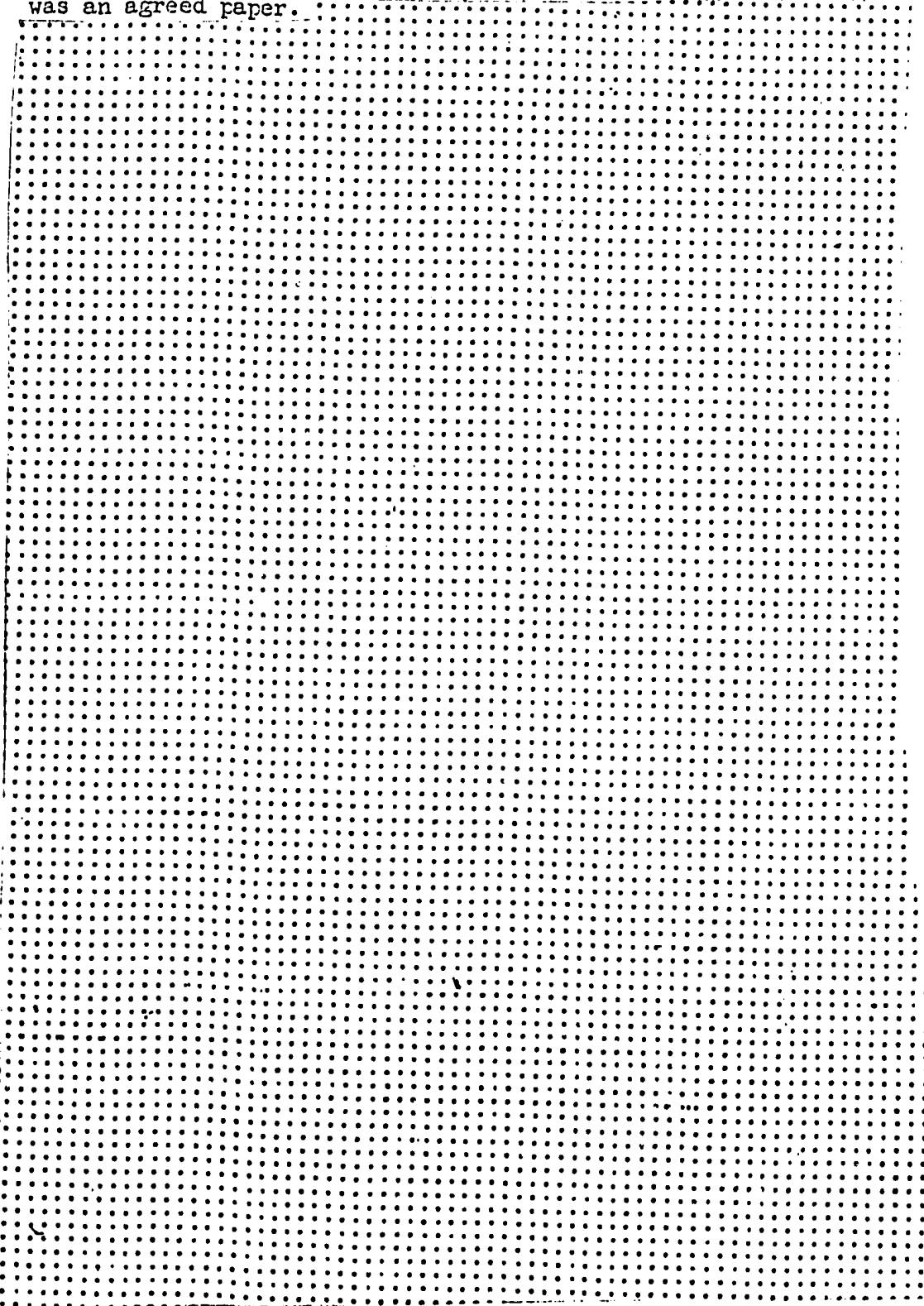
NLE Case MR 80-177-14

By JWTH NLE Date 12/16/69

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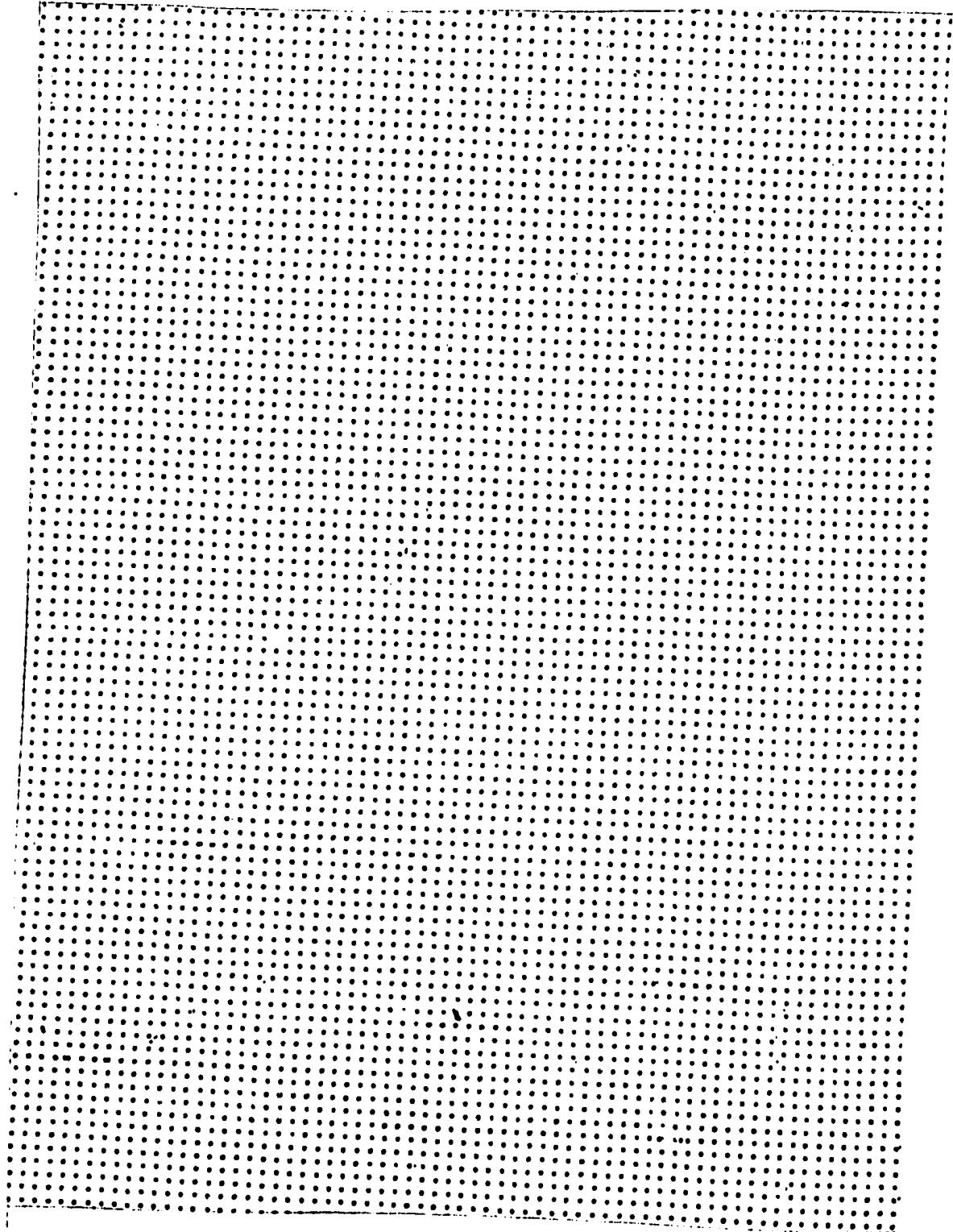
was an agreed paper.



Pages 3 through 7 are exempted in their entirety.

Mr. Gray indicated that this seemed to conclude the discussion of the first paper and suggested that the Council turn its attention to the second paper, non-military, entitled: "Analysis of Non-Military Measures to Induce the Soviet Union to Remove Obstructions to Western Access to Berlin". He promptly called on Secretary Herter for a summary of the contents of this paper.

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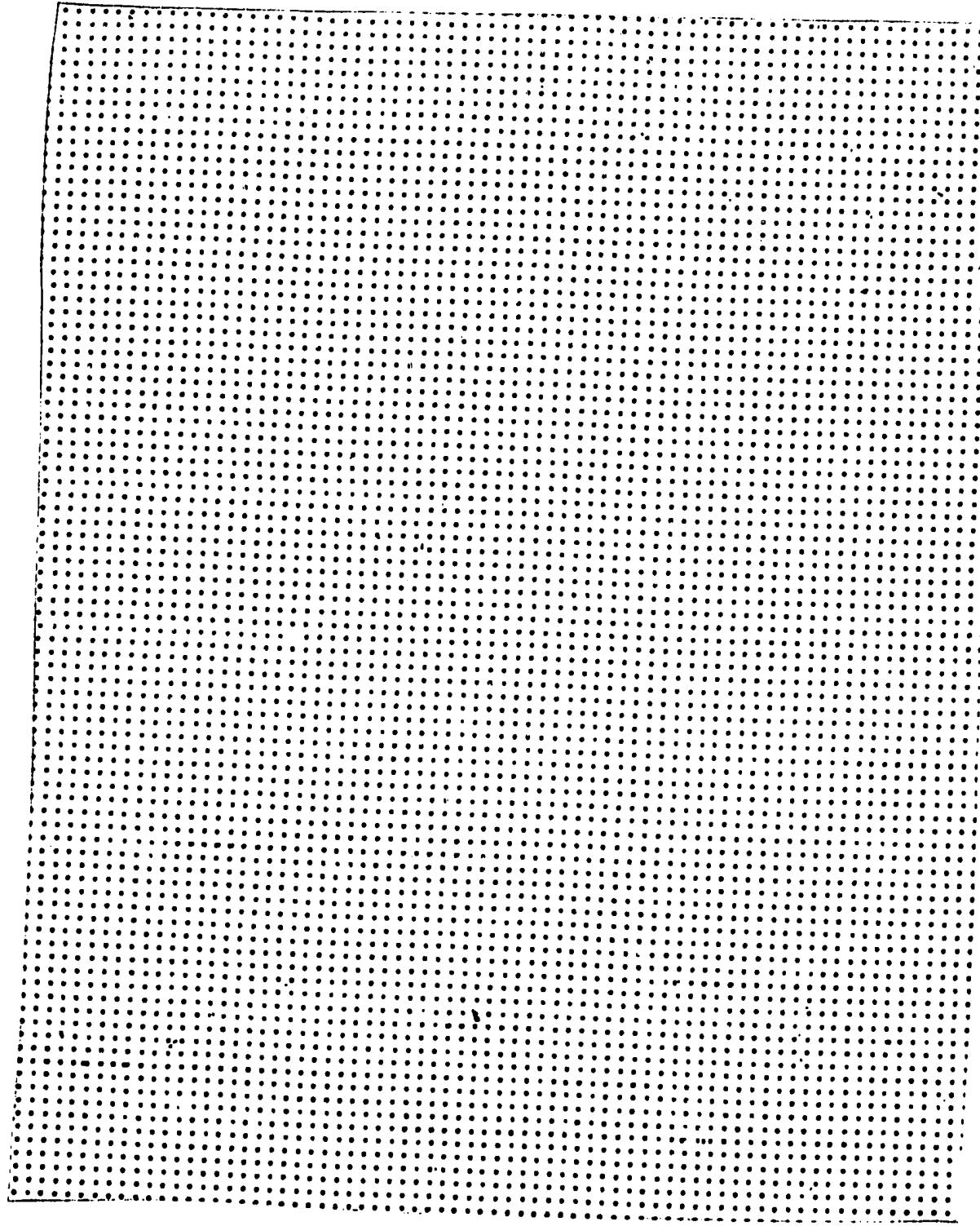


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Secretary Anderson said he had been wondering whether it would be possible for members of the State Department to approach leaders of both parties of the Congress with suggestions that they make statements on the floor of the House or the Senate with respect to our course of action on Berlin. The statements he had in mind, said Secretary Anderson, would not be cast in a belligerent form but would be designed as an indication of the firm resolution of the U.S. If such statements were carefully prepared and delivered, Secretary Anderson believed that they would constitute a source of strength for the U.S. position at the forthcoming Foreign Ministers' Meeting. They would also serve the purpose of preparing the people of the U.S. for all the eventualities they faced. Lastly, such statements would help Mr. Allen and the U.S.I.A. to mobilize world opinion in defense of the U.S. and the Western position.

Secretary Herter commented that he believed that the President's recent speech had done the best job in explaining the problem of Berlin to the people of the country.

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The Vice President observed that Secretary Anderson had made a good point in suggesting speeches by Congressmen and Senators about our position in the Berlin crisis. Nevertheless, as far as public opinion of this country was concerned, the President's speech on the Berlin crisis had been much the most effective statement thus far. Members of Congress, for example Senator Fulbright, have already talked a great deal about the Berlin crisis. In these circumstances the Vice President believed that Berlin might be the subject of the first public statement by our new Secretary of State. This would be bound to have a very considerable effect - much more effect than any speech by any member of Congress, however distinguished.

The President said he thought very well of the Vice President's proposal. Such a speech by Secretary Herter could well take the form of a talk to the people in a homely fashion. It should be designed to explain the continuity of our policy; it should avoid inciting to fear and instead stress the continuity of our firm policy with regard to Berlin.

Secretary Herter suggested that if he were to make such a speech, it should be made after he returned from the April 29 meetings in Paris but before he went back to Geneva for the Foreign Ministers' Conference opening on May 11. The Vice President commented that he thought well of the proposed timing. Mr. Allen Dulles suggested the Council on Foreign Relations as a good forum. The Vice President commented that his proposal for a speech by Secretary Herter did not of course exclude speeches afterwards on the floor of the House or the Senate.

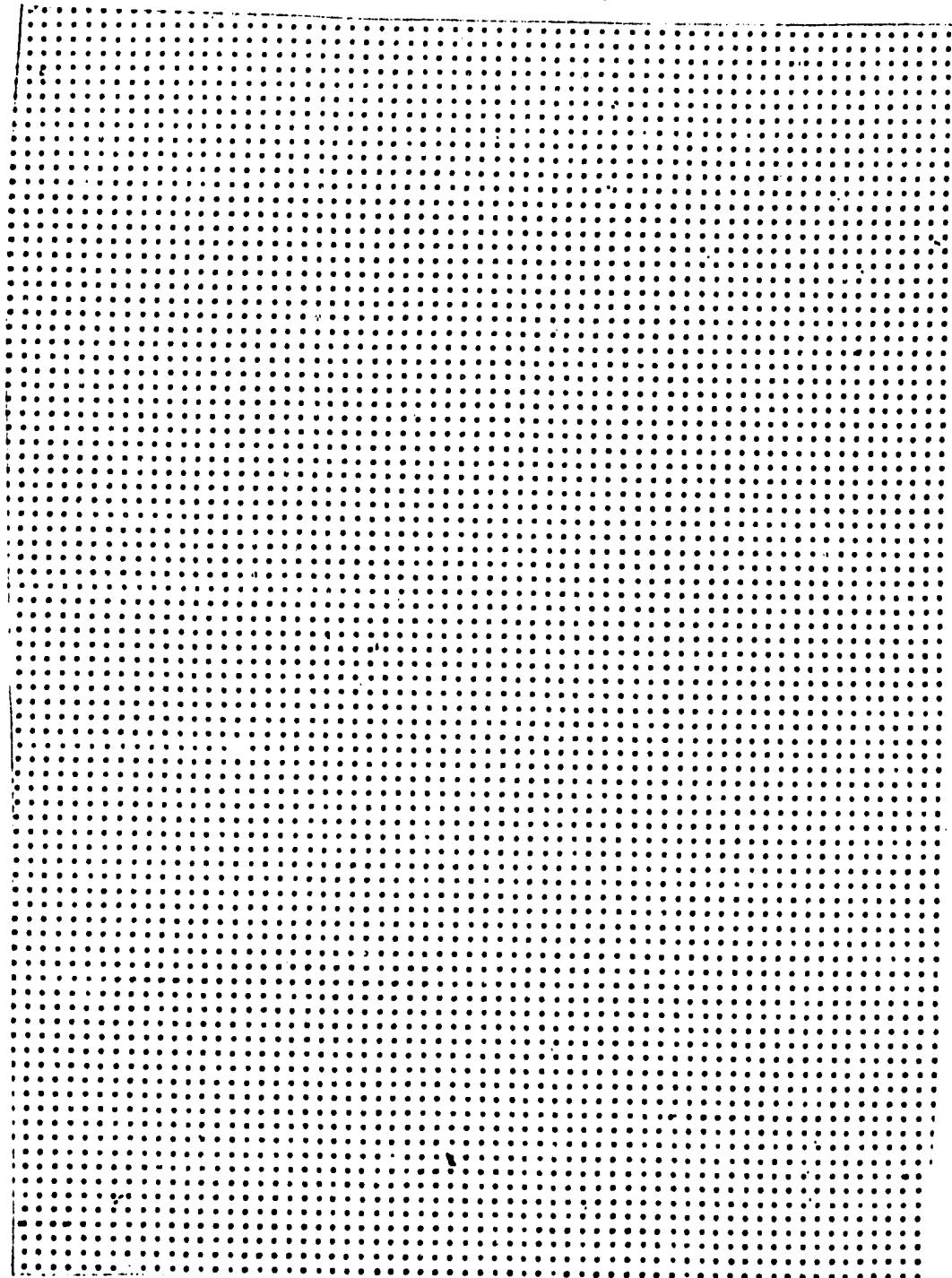
At this point Mr. Gray summed up what he understood to be the action of the Council on these two papers.

The National Security Council:

1. Noted and discussed the two studies prepared at the direction of the President and enclosed with the reference memorandum for the President.
2. [REDACTED]

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S. Everett Gleason

S. EVERETT GLEASON

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